

# SYRACUSE REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

SYRACUSE HANCOCK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
1000 COL. EILEEN COLLINS BLVD.  
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 13212  
P: 315.454.3263  
F: 315.454.8757

## Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority

Friday, December 3, 2021

Pursuant to notice duly given and posted, the regular board meeting of the Syracuse Regional SYR Airport Authority was called to order on Friday, December 3, 2021, in the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority Board Room located in the Syracuse Hancock International Airport and via Teams Video/Audio Conferencing by Vice Chair, Mr. William Fisher.

### Members Present/Video Conference:

Mr. William Fisher – Vice Chair  
Dr. Shiu-Kai Chin  
Dr. Donna DeSiato (joined via Teams/video)  
Mr. Michael Frame  
Mr. Michael Lazar  
Mr. William Meyer (arrived 11:10 a.m.)  
Mr. Robert Simpson (arrived at 11:33 a.m.)

### Members Absent:

Ms. Jo Anne Gagliano – Chair  
Ms. Latoya Allen  
Mr. Kenneth Kinsey  
Mr. Michael Quill

### Also Present/Telephone Conference:

Mr. H. Jason Terreri	Mr. Brian Dorman
Ms. Robin Watkins	Mr. Dan Zenk
Mr. John Clark	Mr. John Herne
Ms. Cheryl Herzog	Ms. Elana Essig
Ms. Debi Marshall	Mr. Matt Szwejbka
Mr. Jason Mehl	

### Roll Call

As noted above, all board members were present except Ms. Jo Anne Gagliano, Ms. Latoya Allen, Mr. Kenneth Kinsey, and Mr. Michael Quill.

Vice Chair Fisher began by welcoming everyone to the scheduled meeting of the SRAA Board at 11:08.a.m.

Minutes were deferred to later in the meeting since a quorum was not available at this time.

Director Terreri made a few announcements prior to the Executive Team Report. He introduced Daniel Zenk who was hired as the Deputy Chief Operations Officer beginning Monday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. The Board welcomed Mr. Zenk to the team.

Vice Chair Fisher announced that a quorum has been met after Mr. Meyer arrived at the meeting. Vice Chair Fisher announced that Mr. Meyer has been with us for the full one-year term which ends on December 31<sup>st</sup>. Vice Chair Fisher thanked Mr. Meyer for serving on the board. There was a brief discussion regarding the one-year term on the SRAA Board with the hope that it can get changed at some point to a two- or three-year alternating rotating term between the towns. Currently, the Authority consists of eleven members; seven appointed by the Mayor of the City of Syracuse, one by the County Executive of Onondaga County, one by the Town Board of the Town of Dewitt, one by the Board of Education of the East Syracuse Minoa School District, and one appointment is shared, on an alternating basis, by the Board of Education of the North Syracuse School District, and the Town Boards of the towns of Salina, Cicero, and Clay. Members of the SRAA Authority Board serve in a volunteer capacity.

### **Reading and Approval of the Minutes**

Having no objections or additions to the minutes from the October 22, 2021, SRAA Regular Meeting of the Board, a motion was made by Mr. Lazar and seconded by Dr. Chin, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Executive Team Report**

Director Terreri kicked off the report with the announcement of a new route map with Dallas, Fort Worth as well as the Baltimore Washington hub on it. Last month was the official launch of Southwest, and has been well received. Director Terreri and Research Analyst, Elana Essig will meet with the Southwest team at their headquarters next week to discuss SYR performance and future planning. The enplanements data showed a rapid recovery. The data that the Airport is tracking by home zip codes indicates that we are pulling passengers from south of CNY, north from the Watertown areas as well as starting to pull people from the Rochester catchment area into the SYR airport. This time of year, we will see a bump with Canadian traffic and then it typically goes down. The SYR Enplanement data indicates that we are currently in line with Albany, with Buffalo numbers still down due to the boarder closing. This data does not include the increase that we will see with the Southwest flights from November. Scheduled flights as of January are exceeding scheduled flights from 2019. The airlines typically finalize schedules 0 to 90 days out. Changes are expected for January and February, with additional adjustments for March. Thanksgiving is traditionally one of the busiest travel weeks. Actual data was pulled through the checkpoint, comparing Monday to Monday for that week and seats were within 2% of 2019 and 12% in flights. The difference showing flight numbers being down is due to frequency reduction but with increased aircraft size. The Airport is expected to have a busy February and March for spring breaks. Director Terreri discussed the recovering network gaps. A seasonal Minneapolis route is expected to return in 2022. All numbers are anticipated to go up next month. Mr. Lazar asked if the airport is better with less flights that are larger or more small flights. CFO Watkins explained that we are better off with larger plane flights. Director Terreri further explained that the bigger the plane the higher passenger number which then drives parking, concession, and higher landing weights can help on the airfield with our landing fees reducing.

CFO Watkins reviewed the financials. The landing weights are running above budget. Both cargo and commercial have been running consistently. This is above where it was expected to be. This report data is prior to the Southwest launch so we will see the numbers increase. Additionally, several of the airlines increased their plane sizes earlier than expected. Director Terreri mentioned the American Airline Dallas

flight that began as a regional jet in August, will be upgrading to a mainline run in December. Southwest flights are sold out right now through February, therefore they just upgraded flights to larger aircraft which open up more seat capacity. CFO Watkins stated that the airport is above budget. The financials were discussed, improvements are seen in airline revenues, concession, and transportation. Non-aeronautical revenues are on target despite some negatives due to closure of parking spot areas inside the garage. Spots have been opened back up and this number will change in coming months. The expenses are consistent with plan. There are some timing differences but that will even out. Non-operating revenues are starting to come in for reimbursements of grants related to construction. Lease expenses to the city and interest expense have some variation due to the bond closing at the end of October. The Passenger Facility Charges (PFC) and Customer Facility Charges (CFC) income is up especially as it relates to passengers. CFO Watkins reviewed a Cost Per Enplaned passenger (CPE) tracking graph. The graph highlighted where we were in 2016 and where we will be in 2022. By driving this number down, it encourages generation of new airline traffic business in the SYR Airport. Vice Chair Fisher inquired if we could see the CPE back to when the Authority was first created. It was agreed that this is something that can be provided.

Chief Commercial Officer, Jason Mehl discussed the Revenue per Enplanement (RPE), which is the amount of money that each passenger is spending on concessions. The airport is still below the 2019 amount, but we are getting there. The revenues are improving and are over budget. An area of improvement is just focusing on what we currently have at the airport. There has been some decline in retail. Serenity Bar + Market is capturing an increase in spending. There is continued improvement and the authority is working with Delaware North to improve upon some of the offerings and menu items. The Airport has received two Escape Pods. These are a soundproof, private workspace for travelers. SYR is the 12<sup>th</sup> airport in the country to have Escape Pods. The other two will arrive by the end of the Q1 2022. One of two planned Yo-Kai Ramen Machines have arrived, and we are waiting for the food supply to come in. An RFP was issued for a Common Use Lounge. We had five companies that showed interest, and the proposals are due January 12, 2022. CVS has signed a contract to have vending machines at the airport.

Human Resources Manager, Debi Marshall provided an SRAA Organizational Update. The Authority recently had some Promotions, Aaron Harris - Airport Operations Officer, John Murphy - Director of Airfield Maintenance replacing Ron Bowles who retired from this position in November and Jeff Kunsman - Airfield Maintenance Crew Leader. The airport has two new employees AJ Martino – Airport Maintenance Worker and Dan Zenk – Deputy Chief Operations Officer. The airport is recruiting for Airport Maintenance Workers either one or two based on winter need and we are conducting a search for an Airport Planner. The Risk Manager position is currently on hold. The Authority is looking to hire several custodial workers. Board member Frame asked if we are having an issue with hiring with the current pay scale. Ms. Marshall indicated that is not an issue, the salaries offered are still competitive. Ms. Marshall acknowledged Elana Essig, who received her AAAE Certified Member certification, we would like to congratulate her. An AAAE CM academy will be offered at the SYR Airport in June for interested employees. The Human Resources Initiatives were reviewed. The Annual Benefits Enrollment is completed, and a vaccine clinic will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, along with booster and flu shot offerings at the same time. This clinic will be opened up to all airport employees. The DEI Cultural Climate Assessment was completed, results of interviews and focus groups will be presented to Executive leadership team on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Mandatory Sexual Harassment training will be held on December 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. Succession Planning is still in discussion and a meeting with supervisors will be held in December and January. Our employee newsletter will be presented at the December 21<sup>st</sup> Town Hall meeting. The SYR ADA/Title VI complaints were discussed.

Director Terreri informed the Board that Jennifer Sweetland, Director of Marketing, Communications

and Air Service Development, will be leaving the Authority on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. She has accepted a new position in the community. Jennifer has done a phenomenal job at SYR over the years and has left her mark at our airport. If you see her congratulate her, we are sad to see her go. Mr. Simpson stated he has worked with Jennifer and the level of leadership she demonstrates along with her strategy and creativity is of the highest caliber.

Dr. Chin made a motion to thank Jennifer Sweetland for her years of service and outstanding accomplishments. Bill Fisher added that he wishes her well in her endeavors. Mr. Lazar seconded and all members were in favor.

Mr. Lazar mentioned he likes the Executive Report refinements each time it is given, that it has gotten shorter with more information and at a higher level of detail that the Board is looking for.

Vice Chair Fisher clarified attendance that Mr. Meyer joined and also Rob Simpson joined during the presentation, and we are now above quorum.

### **New Business/Discussion**

### **RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2022 REGULAR BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE SYRACUSE REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY**

Vice Chair Fisher spoke about the reasoning behind the new calendar. The general idea was to keep the Board meetings down in quantity and have the majority of the work be done by the committees. He mentioned it may be time to allow the committees to do more. The goal is with the new calendar is to have more attendance and participation at the committee level, where most work will be done. If there is a need for a special board meeting it would be added to the schedule.

Having no further discussion regarding this resolution, a motion was made by Dr. Chin and seconded by Mr. Frame.

The resolution was adopted: 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstain

Vice Chair Fisher mentioned he would like to use other tools to create collaboration. He feels email is not a great way to share information, and file attachments and to try to figure out the newest version of a document. He would like to request to have some discussion at the January board meeting about the current communication policy system. A conversation ensued regarding the current policy in place. All questions were answered and will be brought for further discussion in January.

### **Executive Session**

Vice Chair Fisher invited a motion to go into executive session to discuss matters pertaining to potential litigation and the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property by the Authority.

Dr. Chin made the motion and Mr. Frame seconded the motion. Executive session began at 12:13 p.m. Executive session ended at 12:59 p.m. No action was taken.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Mr. Frame and seconded by Mr. Meyer to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 1:01 p.m.